

clearance from them. It is also seen that lots of difficulties are experienced in obtaining clearance from the centre. In view of this, will the Government consider to set up a co-ordination committee for coordination between the Ministry of Irrigation, Ministry of Forest and the concerned State Governments so that the irrigation projects are cleared and completed easily.

SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI: If there is any threat to these projects on account of water, suitable remedial measures could be taken by our Ministry, but what can I say if the projects are not being cleared by the department of forests and any difficulty is being experienced on that account.

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a matter of national importance. Today, a number of irrigation projects are lying incomplete. Though work on them has been started, but these cannot be executed for want of clearance from the Forest Department. Please ask the hon. Minister to do the needful in this regard. A lot of money is going waste, Sir. (*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI: It has no concern with the Ministry of Water Resources.

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA: It is definitely the concern of your department.

SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI: No, no.

[*English*]

Rail-cum-Road Bridge at Jogighopa

*864. SHRI ABDUL HAMID†:
SHRI BHADRESWAR TANTI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAY be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated cost to be incurred on construction of rail-cum-road bridge over river Brahmaputra at Jogighopa; and

(b) the time by which the project is likely to be completed?'

[*Translation*]

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) As per estimate sanctioned in April, 1987, the cost of rail-cum-road bridge over river Brahmaputra at Jogighopa was Rs. 20.05 crores, including share of Ministry of Surface Transport, but excluding cost of road approaches.

(b) The completion of the project would depend on availability of resources in the coming years.

[*English*]

SHRI ABDUL HAMID: The Minister in his statement has stated that an amount of Rs. 120.05 crore has been sanctioned for the construction of a rail-cum-road bridge at Jogighopa. But he is not able to give the target date for the commissioning of the bridge. But the construction of the bridge is not the solution to the acute backwardness of the area. Simultaneously a national railway line is essential. Recently, there has been proposal for a railway line from Pancharatna to Guwahati and I think it has been sanctioned by the Government. I want to know the amount sanctioned for the project and as to when the work will be started.

Another point is, I want to know if there is any proposal for a new railway line from Goalpara to Manikachar which is a border town in Goalpara district, which is the most backward district and there are no other means of communications there. Therefore, I want to know from the hon. Minister when the new railway line from Goalpara to Guwahati would be commissioned and if there are any plans with the Government, for a new line from Goalpara to Manikachar.

[*Translation*]

SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD: Sir, I have already replied to the main question of the hon. Member. The main question pertains to Jogighopa and Guwahati. Since it is a very

important bridge, we are concentrating on 3 points in respect of the construction of this bridge. i.e. the construction of bridge itself, construction of approach roads and laying of a 143 kilometer long railway line from Jogighopa to Guwahati. Work on the project has been started in 1986. I would also like to inform the hon. Member that a sum to the tune of Rs. 35.30 crores has already been spent on this project by 31-3-1989 and upto March, 89, 17.5 percent work of the project has been completed. As regards the point he has raised now, no action has been taken so far. If the Hon. Member is interested in more details, I would like to inform him that we have undertaken work of 7 new railway lines in the North-Eastern sector. Work on Dharmanagar-Kumarghat line will be completed by December 89. A total stretch of 22 kilometres of railway has already been opened for traffic and the second...

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH: He is not interested in details. You are unnecessarily telling all these things.

SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD: I am telling about the new railway lines for the information of Hon. Member.

MR. SPEAKER: Tell only that much what he has asked.

SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD: Sir, we are going to open 4 new lines in 1989-90 in the North-Eastern region. As regard the point he has raised now, I would say that no action has been taken on it so far.

[*English*]

SHRI ABDUL HAMID: There is a standing convention that eighty per cent of the job will be provided to the local people. But in Assam, with regard to construction of the railway bridge, allegations were made by the people that less than forty per cent people have been recruited from the local people and another forty per cent people have been recruited from outside the district. As far as construction work is concerned, Goalpara district is the most backward districts and

there are hundreds of landless people. The Company which has been entrusted with the construction work is recruiting labourers from outside the district. I want to know from the hon. Minister, whether the Government will give strict direction to the Railway Department as well as the construction company to recruit local people for the construction work as well as the railway job.'

[*Translation*]

SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD: Sir, there is no information with about the people who have been given employment in these projects. The hon. Member has asked about jobs in the project. If the hon. Member is interested in the details, he may give it in writing. I shall send him a written reply indicating as to whether local people have been employed there or people from outside have been engaged.

[*English*]

SHRI BHADRESWAR TANTI: Sir, communication is the most important one in the modern days. So far as my State Assam is concerned, it is very much neglected. As far as railway communication is concerned, we have been pleading to the Government time and again to improve the communication system. There are proposals for new bridges, not only Jogighopa put Bogibill in Dibrugarh. The Government has not taken any steps as far as the Bogibill bridge is concerned. In the second part of the answer, the Minister has stated that there is no time bound programme. I would say, it is a cavalier reply. I want to know from the Minister, how many years they will take to complete the bridge; whether this will be completed within this century or the next century; to whom the construction work has been entrusted; and whether any middlemen has been engaged while giving the construction work.'

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI: Sir, we have the same reply despite a large number of

questions on it.

SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD: In reply to the hon. Member's question as to the sources from which this expenditure is being met, I would like to inform him that funds for the project are being made available from 3 sources i.e., the North-Eastern Council, the Ministry of Surface Transport and the Railway. He has also enquired about the time by which the project is likely to be completed. I have already stated that it depends on the availability of resources. But for the year 1989-90 the Ministry of Railways has earmarked a sum of Rs. 13 crores for the purpose and the Ministry of Surface has given an assurance to provide Rs. 10 crores for the construction of this bridge. At the same time..... (*Interruptions*)

You are a very learned Member. Please listen carefully. The North-Eastern Council has assured to provide a sum of Rs. 20 crores. A provision of Rs. 43 crores has been made for the current financial year, 1989-90 and the work is in full swing. Now our efforts are concentrated at completing the Jogighopa bridge. The point of taking up any other bridge will be considered later.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: The hon. Minister stated just now that the construction of Dharmanagar-Kumarghat railway line.

MR. SPEAKER: It has no concern with it.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Since he had himself given this information I was asking. It will be commissioned by December 1989, but the pace of construction is very slow. It took 9 years for 53 kilometres. But the demand of Tripura is not only for the construction of railway line from Dharmanagar to Kumarghat but also for the railway line from Dharmanagar to Agartala. The Hon. Prime Minister had also given an assurance before the assembly elections that construction would be undertaken to lay railway line from Dharmanagar to Agartala. I would like to know if a plan to construct a railway line from Dharmanagar to Agartala has been

included in the Eighth Five Year Plan.

SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD: I would like to inform the hon. Member that the line covering a distance of 33 kilometres from Dharmanagar to Kumarghat is under construction and it will be opened to traffic in December 1989. So far no decision has been taken to extend the construction upto Agartala.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: What was the assurance of the Hon. Prime Minister?

[*English*]

SHRI HAREN BHUMJ: Sir, the holy Ganges and the Brahmaputra are the two holy rivers flowing in the country. There are eight bridges over the Ganges covering 800 kms. The Brahmaputra is also equal in length covering 800 kms., but it is having only two bridges; one is rail-cum-road bridge and the other is road bridge. What to speak of the construction of the the bridge, even the consideration of the the bridge, even the consideration for construction of the fourth bridge at Bogibil near Dibrugarh over Brahmaputra is also under shadow. It is the feeling of the people of the State that the State which is producing coal, oil, plywood and more than 50 per cent of the total production of tea in this country, is lagging behind with inadequate rail communication and road transportation; they are having only two bridges over Brahmaputra even after 42 years of independence. In view of the feelings of the people that the State is treated step-motherly I want to know through you the reaction of the Government.'

[*Translation*]

SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD: Sir, it has no relevance with the main question.

[*English*]

Transportation of Pan Baskets

*866. **SHRI ANOOPCHAND SHAH:** Will the Minister of RAILWAY be pleased to state: